

**ARTICLE 5**  
**SEWERAGE UTILITIES**  
**SUBARTICLE 1**  
**GENERAL**

**103-500.** Authorization of Rules.

A. Section 58-5-210 of the Code of laws of South Carolina, 1976, provides: "That the Public Service Commission, is hereby, to the extent granted, vested with power and jurisdiction to supervise and regulate the rates and service of every public utility in this State, together with the power, after hearing, to ascertain and fix such just and reasonable standards, classifications, regulations, practices, and measurements of service to be furnished, imposed, observed and followed by every public utility in this State, and the State hereby asserts its rights to regulate the rates and services of every public utility as herein defined." In accordance with the above provisions the Public Service Commission has adopted the following rules and regulations and fixed the following standards to govern sewer service by public utilities. All previous rules or standards are hereby revoked, annulled, and superseded.

B. The adoption of these rules shall in no way preclude the Public Service Commission from altering, amending, or revoking them in whole or in part, or from requiring any other or additional service, equipment, facility, or standard, either upon complaint, upon the application of any utility, or upon its own motion. Furthermore, these rules shall not relieve either the Commission or the Utilities of any duties prescribed under the laws of this State.

**103-501.** Application of Rules.

1. Jurisdiction. These rules shall apply to any person, firm, partnership, or association, establishment, corporation (except public utilities owned or operated by any municipality or agency thereof and/or any sewer authority specifically exempted by statute) which is now or may hereafter become engaged as a public utility in the business of collecting or treating sewerage for any sewerage customer within the State of South Carolina.

2. Purpose. These rules are intended to define good practice. They are intended to insure adequate and reasonable service. The Utilities shall assist the Commission and the ORS in the implementation of these rules and regulations.

3. Waiver of Rules. In any case where compliance with any of these rules and regulations introduces unusual difficulty, such rules or regulations may be waived by the Commission upon a finding by the Commission that such waiver is in the public interest.

**103-502.** Definitions.

**103-502.1. Commission.**

The Public Service Commission of South Carolina.

**103-502.42. Customer.**

Any person, firm, partnership, or corporation, or any agency of the Federal, State, or Local Government, being supplied with service by a utility under the jurisdiction of this Commission. Customers shall be classified for purposes of applying rates as "residential", "commercial", or "industrial".

**103-502.123. Customer Main Extension Fee.**

A fee paid by a customer under a contract entered into by and between the utility and its customer providing terms for the extension of the utility's mains to service the customer.

**103-502.84. Customer Service Line.**

The portion of pipe on the customer's premises which transports sewerage from the customer's premises to the "utility service line".

**103-502.35. Homeowners Association.**

An association of lot owners located in a particular subdivision or development incorporated under the laws of this State as a non-profit corporation, including as one of its purposes, the operation of a sewerage system to serve the particular subdivision or development. Each homeowners association, prior to the commencement of operations of a sewerage system, shall file with the Commission (a) a certified copy of its certificate of incorporation; (b) a copy of the corporation's bylaws; (c) a copy of any declaration of covenants, conditions and restrictions on real property in the subdivision or development filed in conjunction with the formation of the homeowners association; (d) a copy of the permit or authorization from the Department of Health and Environmental Control issued to the homeowners association to operate the system, and (e) copies of a statement signed by each lot owner disclosing that the sewerage services in the subdivision are provided by a non-profit homeowners association, in which each lot owner is a voting member, and that an appropriate assessment to meet operating expenses of the Utility must be paid by each lot owner.

**103-502.6. Main.**

A sewerage pipe owned, operated, or maintained by a utility, which is used to transport sewerage, but does not include the "utility service line", or "customer service line".

**103-502.57. Premises.**

A piece or tract of land or real estate, including buildings and other appurtenances thereon.

**103-502.408.** Rate.

The term "rate", when used in these rules and regulations, means and includes every compensation, charge, toll, rental, classification, or availability fee, or any of them, including tap fee, or other non-recurring charges demanded, observed, charged, or collected by any utility for any service offered by it to the public, and any rules, regulations, practices, or contracts affecting any such compensation, charge, toll, rental, classification, or availability fee. An application for approval of any rate schedule will not be accepted for filing under S.C. Code Ann., § 58-5-240 unless accompanied by the information specified under 103-512(4).

**103-502.9.** The Office of Regulatory Staff.

The executive director and employees of the Office of Regulatory Staff.

**103-502.410.** Tap Fee.

A non-recurring, non-refundable charge related to connecting the customer to the utility's system which includes the cost of installing the utility's service line from the main to the customer's premises and a portion of plant capacity which will be used to provide service to the new customer. Plant capacity shall be computed by using the Guide Lines for Unit Contributory Loadings to Wastewater Treatment Facilities (1972) to determine the single family equivalency rating. Any privately-owned corporation, firm, partnership, or individual empowered by contract, or otherwise, to collect a tap fee from a customer for the provision of sewerage service to that customer shall be considered a utility, and shall obtain Commission approval prior to collecting tap fees, or any other rates for sewerage service. An application for approval of any rate change shall not be considered unless the filing contains appropriate exhibits setting forth all cost criteria justifying the tap fee, setting forth the portion of the tap fee related to installing the service line and the portion related to plant capacity.

**103-502.211.** Utility.

Every person, firm, partnership, association, establishment or corporation furnishing or supplying in any manner sewerage collection and/or sewerage disposal service to the public or any portion thereof, for compensation. A "homeowners association", as defined in 3 of this rule and subject to the requirements set forth herein, upon Commission order, may be found not to be a utility.

**103-502.712.** Utility Service Line.

The portion of pipe which runs from the customer's premises to the main, and which receives sewerage from the "customer service line".

**103-502.913. Sewerage or Wastewater Plant.**

Plant and property owned by a utility, used in its business operations of providing sewerage collection and/or sewerage disposal service to its customers.

**103-503. Authorization for Rates and Charges.**

A. No schedule of rates, contracts, or rules and regulations, shall be changed until after the proposed change has been approved by the Commission.

B. All rates, contract forms, and rules and regulations, proposed to be put into effect by any utility as defined in 103-502(2) shall be first approved by this Commission before they shall become effective, unless they are exempt from such approval by statute or other provision of law.

C. No rate, contract, or rule and regulation of any utility under the jurisdiction of this Commission shall be deemed approved or consented to by the mere filing of a schedule, or other evidence thereof, in the offices of the Commission or the ORS.

D. Each customer within a given classification (i.e., residential, commercial, or industrial) shall be charged the same approved rate, including tap fees, as every other customer within that classification, unless reasonable justification is shown for the use of a different rate, and a contract or tariff setting for the different rate has been filed and approved by the Commission through the issuance of an order or directive.

**103-504. Territory and Certificates.**

No existing public utility supplying wastewater disposal to the public, or any individual, corporation, partnership, association, establishment, or firm undertaking the construction or acquisition of a utility, shall hereafter sell, acquire, transfer, begin the construction or operation of any utility system, or of any extension thereof, by the sale of stock or otherwise, without first obtaining from the commission a certificate that the sale, transfer, or acquisition is in the public interest, or that public convenience and necessity require or will require construction or operation of any utility system, or extension. Such certificate shall be granted only after the applicable information set forth in Subarticle 2, 103-510 et seq., has been filed with the Commission and provided to the ORS, and after notice has been given to the Department of Health and Environmental Control and to other interested wastewater utilities, and to the public, and after due hearing. Provided, however, that this regulation shall not be construed to require any existing utility to secure a certificate for an extension within or to territory already served by it, necessary in the ordinary course of its business. But, if any utility in constructing or extending its lines, plant or system unreasonably interferes, or is about to unreasonably interfere, with the service or system of any other utility, the commission may make such order, and prescribe such terms and conditions, in harmony with this regulation, as are just and reasonable.

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**103-505. Utility Rules and Regulations.**

Each utility shall adopt rules, regulations, operation procedure policies, terms and conditions, etc., as may be necessary in the operation of the Utility. Such service conditions and/or regulations shall be approved by and filed with the Commission and the ORS.

**103-506. Security Issues.**

A. No utility shall issue any securities without the approval of the Commission. This rule shall not apply to any issue of securities payable within one year from the date of issue, except in case of subsequent issues made to refund such short-term obligations; but such short-term obligations may be renewed by similar obligations without the approval of the Commission for an aggregate period not exceeding two years.

B. Any utility desiring to issue any securities may apply to the Commission for approval of the proposed issue by filing an application with the Commission and serving a copy on the ORS together with a statement verified by (1) its president and secretary or other appropriate officers; (2) two of its incorporators; or (3) by its owner or owners, if it is unincorporated, setting forth:

- (a) The amount and character of securities proposed to be issued;
- (b) The purpose for which they are to be issued;
- (c) The consideration for which they are to be issued;
- (d) The description and estimated value of the property, if any, to be acquired through the proposed issue;
- (e) The terms and conditions of the issuance; and
- (f) The financial condition of the utility and its operations so far as relevant.

C. The Commission shall determine whether the purpose of the issue is proper; shall value the property or services, if any, to be acquired by the issue; shall find and determine the amount of such securities reasonably necessary for the purpose for which they are to be issued. This determination shall follow such investigation as may be necessary, wherein the utility and any other interested party shall be entitled to be heard.

D. To the extent that the Commission may approve the proposed issue, it shall grant to the utility a Certificate of Authority stating the character of the securities, the amount reasonably necessary for the purpose for which they are to be issued, and the value of any property or services, if any, to be acquired. This certification shall not impose or imply any guaranty or obligation as to such securities on the part of the Commission.

## **SUBARTICLE 2**

### **RECORDS AND REPORTS**

#### **103-510. Location of Records and Reports.**

All records required by these rules are necessary for the administration thereof, shall be kept within an office located in this State, unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Commission. These records shall be available for examination by the Commission and ORS or its authorized representatives at all reasonable hours.

#### **103-511. Retention of Records.**

Unless otherwise specified by the Commission, or by regulations or Commission Orders governing specific activities, all records required by these rules shall be preserved for two years.

#### **103-512. Data to be Filed with the Commission and provided to the ORS.**

##### **103-512.1. Annual Report.**

Each utility operating in the State shall file an annual report with the Commission and ORS giving accounting and other information as the Commission orders. The Commission or the ORS will provide an annual report form upon request. If the utility's books are maintained on a calendar year, the annual report must be filed on or before April 1st of each year. If the utility uses a fiscal year other than December 31st, the annual report should be filed within three months after the end of the fiscal year.

##### **103-512.2. Current Information and Documents.**

~~The utility shall file with the Commission the following documents and information, and shall maintain such documents and information in a current status.~~

##### **103-512.2. 1. Tariff.**

A copy of each schedule of rates and charges for service, together with the applicable riders, including any rules and regulations, or terms and conditions describing policies and practices of rendering service shall be provided to the Commission and the ORS.

##### **103-512.2. 2. Special Contract Forms.**

A copy of each special contract for service, including aid to construction agreements, and rate agreements shall be provided to the Commission and the ORS.

##### **103-512.2. 3. Customer Bill.**

A copy of each type of customer bill form, which shall include the information which is normally shown on a customer's bill for service shall be provided to the ORS.

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**103-512.2. 4. Operating Area Maps.** A map of the utility's operating area.

This map shall be revised annually unless such revision is unnecessary, in which event the utility shall notify the Commission and the ORS that the map on file is current. The map should show:

- (a) Location of transmission lines, pumping stations, waste treatment plants and discharge points;
- (b) Mains by size;
- (c) Service area clearly drawn on operating area map using proper surveying standards;
- (d) Names of all communities (post offices) served; and
- (e) Capacity of the system.

**103-512.2. 5. Authorized Utility Representative.**

The utility shall advise the Commission and ORS of the name, title, address, and telephone number of the person who should be contacted in connection with:

- (a) General management duties;
- (b) Customer relations (complaints);
- (c) Engineering operations; and
- (d) Emergencies during non-office hours.

**103-512.3. Performance Bond.**

Prior to operating, maintaining, acquiring, expanding or improving any utility system, for which Commission approval is required, the utility shall have on file with the Commission and provide a copy to the ORS a performance bond with sufficient surety using a format prescribed by the Commission.

**103-512.3. 1. Amount of Bond.**

The amount of bond shall be based on, but not limited to, the total amount of the following categories of expenses for twelve months: Operation and Maintenance Expenses, General and Administrative Expenses, Taxes Other Than Income Taxes, Income Taxes, and Debt Service including Interest Expenses. The minimum amount of

the bond shall be \$100,000 and the maximum amount of the bond shall be \$350,000. A bond shall be required for each water and wastewater provider under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission. A certification that the face amount of the bond on file with the Commission complies with the provisions of 103-512.3.1 of this rule shall be filed with the annual report required by 103-512.1 of this rule. The Staff shall review the annual reports and certifications and determine whether the present bond of the utility accurately reflects the expenses of the utility. Based upon the expenses of the utility as submitted in the annual report and as reviewed and adjusted by the ORS Staff, the ORS Staff shall make recommendations for increasing or reducing the amount of the bond within the minimum and maximum limits as prescribed by statute.

**103-512.3. 2. Sureties.**

Sufficient surety may be any duly licensed bonding or insurance company authorized to do business in this State. A corporate surety, other than such a bonding or insurance company, shall not be considered sufficient surety. Sufficient surety may be any individual, as stockholder, partner, sole owner, etc., in the utility, so long as the individual surety's net worth is at least twice the face amount of the performance bond.

**103-512.3. 3. Financial Statement.**

When any individual acts as surety, he shall file with the Commission and provide a copy to the ORS annually a financial statement verified by said surety showing the individual surety's personal assets, liabilities, and net worth. The Commission may accept a verification of the financial statement in a format prescribed by the Commission.

**103-512.4. Rate Applications.**

A. When a utility makes application for an increase in existing rates and charges, such application shall not be accepted for filing unless it contains the following information:

- 1) A statement of reason justifying the need for the proposed rate adjustments;
- 2) Current income and expense statement for the preceding twelve months;
- 3) Proposed rate schedule;
- 4) Test year proposed to be used;
- 5) Pro-forma income and expense statement using proposed rates applied to proposed test year;
- 6) Balance sheet;
- 7) Depreciation schedule by categories of plant or average service lives;



- 8) Number of present and expected customers in the following twelve months;
- 9) Cost justifications for proposed rates and charges, including tap fees, with attached schedules depicting labor costs, materials costs, and miscellaneous costs;
- 10) Filing or updating of performance bond in accordance with 3 of this rule;
- 11) Current or updated service area map;
- 12) Statement of total plant investment;
- 13) Most recent letter of approval from the Department of Health and Environmental Control;
- 14) Customer bill form; and
- 15) Any other pertinent or relevant information determined necessary by the Commission.

B. When any utility makes application for establishment of a service area and rates and charges, such application shall contain the following information:

- 1) Copy of articles of incorporation or partnership agreement;
- 2) Plat of proposed area to be served;
- 3) Copy of engineering plans and specification designed or certified to be in accordance with good engineering practices by a professional engineer registered in South Carolina;
- 4) Construction permit from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control approving the engineering plans and specifications;
- 5) Schedule of proposed rates and charges and cost justifications including tap fees with attached schedules depicting labor costs, materials costs, and miscellaneous costs;
- 6) Number of customers proposed to be served and the capacity of the system;
- 7) Financial statement showing proposed plant investment by categories;
- 8) Depreciation schedule by categories of plant or average service lines;
- 9) Pro-forma income and expense statement showing the effect of using the proposed rates based on plant capacity;
- 10) Filing of performance bond in accordance with 3 of this rule;

11) Statement by a professional engineer that the system was built and installed according to plans and specifications on file with the Commission and will furnish adequate service for the area to be served;

12) Letter from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control approving the system for operation;

13) Customer bill form; and

14) Any other pertinent or relevant information determined necessary by the Commission.

**103-513. Inspection of Plant and Equipment.**

A. Each utility shall, upon request of the Commission or the ORS, ~~file with~~ provide to the Commission or the ORS a statement regarding the condition of the waste treatment facility and the adequacy of the treatment provided by the facility as determined by the Department of Health and Environmental Control and any other information concerning the plant, equipment, facilities and service in such a form as the Commission may require.

B. Each utility shall keep sufficient records to give evidence of compliance with its inspection program as set forth in Subarticle 6, 103-560 et seq.

**103-514. Interruption of Service/Violation of Rules.**

A. Each utility shall keep a record of any condition resulting in any interruption of service affecting its entire system or major division thereof, or any single community or an important division of a community, including a statement of the time, duration, and cause of any such interruption. The Commission and the ORS should be notified of any interruption lasting more than six hours as soon as it comes to the attention of the utility and a complete report made after restoration of service.

B. Each utility shall make all reasonable efforts to prevent interruptions of service and, when such interruptions occur, shall endeavor to re-establish service with the shortest possible delay consistent with the safety of its consumers and the general public. Scheduled interruptions shall always be preceded by adequate notice to all affected customers.

C. All Wastewater Utilities under the jurisdiction of the Commission shall file with the Commission and the ORS in writing a notice of any violation of PSC or DHEC rules which affect the service provided to its customers. This notice shall be filed within 24 hours of the time of the inception of the violation and shall detail the steps to be taken to correct the violation, if violation is not corrected at time of occurrence. The Company shall notify the Commission and the ORS in writing within 14 days after the violation has been corrected.

**103-515. Accidents.**

Each utility shall, as soon as possible, report by telephone to the ~~Commission~~ Chief Clerk of the Commission and the ORS each accident happening in connection with the operation of its property, facilities, or service, wherein any person shall have been killed or seriously injured or whereby any serious property damage shall have been caused. Such first report shall later be supplemented by a full statement provided to the Commission and the ORS of the cause and details of the accident and the precautions, if any, which have been taken to prevent similar accidents.

**103-516. Complaints.**

Complaints by customers concerning the charges, practices, facilities or services of the utility shall be investigated promptly and thoroughly. Each utility shall keep a record of all such complaints received, which record shall show the name and address of the complainant, the date and character of the complaint, and the adjustment or disposal made thereof.

**103-517. Accounting Procedures.**

All books and records of the utility shall be maintained in accordance with the NARUC System of Accounts for Class A, B and C Sewerage Utilities to the extent applicable. Such records must be made available for examination by the ~~Commission~~ ORS or its authorized representatives at all reasonable hours. Full cooperation will be provided by the utility during rate adjustment audits or compliance audits conducted by the ~~Commission~~ ORS or its representatives.

**SUBARTICLE 3**

**METERS**

**103-520. Change in Character of Service.**

In order that the utility may provide a proper service facility, the customer shall advise the utility of expected service requirements sufficiently in advance of the time service is required and shall also advise the utility of any significant increase or decrease in service needs sufficiently in advance of the time to change service facilities.

**SUBARTICLE 4**

**CUSTOMER RELATIONS**

**103-530. Customer Information.**

Each utility shall:

A. Maintain up-to-date maps, plans, or records of its entire force main collection systems, with such other information as may be necessary to enable the utility to advise prospective customers, and others entitled to the information, as to the facilities available for serving customers within its operating area.

B. Notify each affected customer in writing as prescribed by the Commission of any proposed change in rates and charges. A certification that the above notice requirements has been met shall be furnished to the Commission by the utility prior to the public hearing.

C. Provide that a complete schedule, contract forms, rules and regulations, etc., as ~~filed with~~ provided to the Commission and the ORS, shall also be on file in the local offices of the utility and shall be open to the inspection by the public.

D. Assist prospective customers in selecting the most economical rate schedule applicable.

E. Provide adequate means (telephone, etc.) whereby each customer can contact an authorized representative of the utility at all hours in cases of emergency or unscheduled interruptions of service.

F. Notify any customer making a complaint recorded pursuant to R.103-516 that the utility is under the jurisdiction of the Commission and that the customer may notify the ~~Commission~~ ORS of his complaint.

G. Inform each prospective customer from whom a deposit may be required of the provisions contained in R.103-531 and its subsections.

H. Inform each prospective customer that the customers service line and plumbing shall conform to all local plumbing codes, and in the absence of such codes shall conform to the Southern Standard Plumbing Code.

#### **103-531. Customer Deposits.**

Each utility may require from any customer or from any prospective customer, a deposit intended to guarantee payment of bills for service, if any of the following conditions exist:

- (a) The customer's past payment record to a sewerage utility shows delinquent payment practice, i.e., has had two consecutive 30-day arrears, or more than two non-consecutive 30-day arrears in the past 24 months, or
- (b) A new customer cannot furnish either a letter of good credit from a reliable source or an acceptable cosignor to guarantee payment, or
- (c) A customer has no deposit and presently is delinquent in payments (i.e., has had two

consecutive 30-day arrears, or more than two non-consecutive 30-day arrears, in the past 24 months), or

(d) A customer has had his service terminated for nonpayment.

**103-531.1. Amount of Deposit.**

A. A maximum deposit may be required up to an amount equal to an estimated two (2) months (60 days) bill for a new customer or a maximum deposit may be required up to an amount equal to the total actual bills of the highest two (2) consecutive months based on the experience of the preceding twelve (12) months or portion of the year, if on a seasonal basis.

B. All deposits may be subject to review based on the actual experience of the customer. The amount of the deposit may be adjusted upward or downward to reflect the actual billing experience and payment habits of the customer.

**103-531.2. Interest on Deposits.**

A. Simple interest on deposits at the rate as determined by Commission Order shall be paid by the utility to each customer required to make such deposit for the time it is held by the utility, provided that no interest need be paid unless the deposit is held longer than six months.

B. The interest shall be accrued annually and payment of such interest shall be made to the customer at least every two (2) years and at the time the deposit is returned.

C. The deposit shall cease to draw interest on the date it is returned, on the date service is terminated, or on the date notice is sent to the customer's last known address that the deposit is no longer required.

**103-531.3. Deposit Records.**

Each utility shall keep a record to show:

- (a) The name and address of each depositor;
- (b) The amount and date of the deposit; and
- (c) Each transaction concerning the deposits.

**103-531.4. Deposit Receipt.**

Each utility shall issue a receipt of deposit to each customer from whom a deposit is received, and shall provide means whereby a depositor may establish his claim if his receipt is lost.

#### **103-531.5. Deposit Retention.**

Deposits shall be refunded completely with interest after two years unless the customer has had two consecutive 30-day arrearages or more than two non-consecutive 30-day arrearages in the past 24 months.

#### **103-531.6. Unclaimed Deposits.**

A record of each unclaimed deposit must be maintained for at least ~~two~~ one years during which time the sewer utility shall make a reasonable effort to return the deposit. Unclaimed deposits, together with accrued interest, shall be turned over to the South Carolina ~~Tax Commission~~ State Treasurer as prescribed by law.

#### **103-531.7. Deposit Credit**

Where a customer has been required to make a deposit, this shall not relieve the customer of the obligation to pay the service bills when due. Where such deposit has been made and service has been discontinued for reason of nonpayment of bill, a utility shall apply the deposit of such customer toward the discharge of the customer's account, and shall as soon thereafter as practicable, refund the customer any excess of the deposit. If, however, the customer whose service has been disconnected for nonpayment, pays the arrears on his account within 72 hours after service has been disconnected, and applies for reconnection, the utility may not charge an additional deposit except under the provisions of R.103-531.1.

#### **103-532. Customer Billing.**

The utility shall bill each customer as promptly as possible.

##### **103-532.1. Customer Bill Forms**

The bill shall show:

- (a) The gross and/or net amount of the bill;
- (b) Person to whom bill is sent;
- (c) Dates for which bill is rendered;
- (d) The applicable rate schedule, or identification of the rate schedule. If the actual rates are not shown, the bill shall carry a statement to the effect that the applicable rate schedule will be furnished on request;
- (e) Telephone number where utility can be contacted during regular office hours and non-office hours; and

(f) Date payment is due.

**103-532.2. Late Payment Charges.**

A maximum of one and one-half percent (1 and 1/2 %) be added to any unpaid balance not paid within 25 days of the billing date to cover the cost of collection and carrying accounts in arrears. This method of late-payment charge will be made in lieu of any other penalty.

**103-532.3. Payment by Check.**

The utility at its option for good cause may refuse to accept a check tendered as payment on a customer's account and require payment in cash.

**103-532.4. Charges for Disconnection and Reconnection.**

Whenever service is disconnected for violation of rules and regulations, nonpayment of bills or fraudulent use of service, the utility shall not be required to reconnect such service until any arrearages have been paid and a reconnection fee of two-hundred-fifty dollars (\$250.00) has been paid to the utility.

**103-532.5. Deferred Payment Plan.**

The utility shall provide for the arrangement of a deferred payment plan to enable a residential customer to make payment by installments where such customer is unable to pay the amount due for service. The deferred payment plan shall require the affected customer to maintain his account current and pay not less than 1/6 of the outstanding balance for a period not to exceed six months. The outstanding balance may include the late payment charge authorized by R.103-532.5. Service to such customer shall not be terminated unless the utility has informed the customer that such deferred payment plan is available. A deferred payment plan is any agreement to extend or defer a payment cut-off date by more than 5 work days. If a customer fails to conform to the terms and conditions of such deferred payment plan, the utility may terminate service upon fifteen days written notice, with copies of such termination notice mailed to DHEC and the ~~Commission~~ ORS.

**103-533. Adjustment of Bills.**

If it is found that a utility has directly or indirectly, by any device whatsoever, demanded, charged, collected or received from any customer a greater or lesser compensation for any service rendered or to be rendered by such utility than that prescribed in the schedules of such utility applicable thereto, then filed in the manner provided in Title 58 of the South Carolina Code of Laws; or if it is found that any customer has received or accepted any service from a utility for a compensation greater or lesser than that prescribed in such schedules; or if, for any reason, billing error has resulted in a greater or

lesser charge than that incurred by the customer for the actual service rendered, then the method of adjustment for such overcharge or undercharge shall be provided by the following:

1. Customer Inadvertently Overcharged. If the utility has inadvertently overcharged a customer as a result of a misapplied schedule or any other human or machine error, the utility shall at the customer's option credit or refund the excess amount paid by that customer or credit the amount billed as provided by the following:

(a) If the interval during which the customer was overcharged can be determined, then the utility shall credit or refund the excess amount charged during the entire interval provided that the applicable statute of limitations shall not be exceeded.

(b) If the interval during which the customer was overcharged cannot be determined, then the utility shall credit or refund the excess amount charged during the twelve-month period preceding the date when the billing error was discovered.

2. Customer Inadvertently Undercharged. If the utility has undercharged any customer as a result of a misapplied schedule, or any human or machine error, then the utility may recover the deficient amount as provided as follows:

(a) If the interval during which a customer was undercharged can be determined, then the utility may collect the deficient amount incurred during that interval up to a maximum period of six months.

(b) If the interval during which a consumer was undercharged cannot be determined, then the utility may collect the deficient amount incurred during the six-month period preceding the date when the billing error was discovered by the utility.

(c) The customer shall be allowed to pay the deficient amount, in equal installments added to the regular monthly bills, over the same number of billing periods which occurred during the interval the customer was subject to pay the deficient amount.

3. Customer Willfully Overcharged. If the utility has willfully overcharged any customer, the utility shall refund the difference, plus interest, as prescribed by the Commission for the period of time that can be determined that the customer was overcharged.

4. Customer Undercharged Because of Fraud or Willful Misrepresentation. If the utility has undercharged any customer because of the customer's fraudulent actions or because the customer has willfully misrepresented a material fact resulting in an undercharge, or if it is shown that the customer is aware of any fraudulent or illegal action by another person such as tampering with the facilities owned by the utility and it is evident that such action benefits the customer, or if it is evident that a customer has knowledge of being undercharged without notifying the utility of such, then the utility may recover the deficient amount provided as follows:



(a) If the interval during which the customer was undercharged can be determined, then the utility shall collect the deficient amount incurred during that entire interval provided that the applicable statute of limitations is not exceeded.

(b) If the interval during which the customer was undercharged cannot be determined, then the utility shall collect the deficient amount incurred during the twelve-month period preceding the date when the billing error was discovered by the utility.

**103-534. Application for Service.**

A. All applications for sewerage service may be made orally or in writing.

B. The accepted application shall constitute a contract between the company and the applicant, obligating the applicant to pay for sewerage service in accordance with the utility's tariff currently on file with the Public Service Commission and the ORS, and to comply with rules and regulations.

C. When a customer desires to have his service terminated, he must notify the utility and such notification may be orally or in writing. The utility shall be allowed a reasonable period of time after the receipt of such notice to terminate service.

**103-535. Denial or Discontinuance of Service.**

Service may be refused or discontinued for any of the reasons listed below. Unless otherwise stated, the customer shall be allowed a reasonable time in which to comply with the rule before service is discontinued.

A. Without notice in the event of a condition determined by the utility, the Commission, and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control to be hazardous or dangerous.

B. In the event of customer use of equipment in such a manner as to affect adversely the utility's service to others.

C. In the event of unauthorized use of the utility's service.

D. For customer tampering with equipment furnished and owned by the utility. The customer shall make every reasonable effort to prevent tampering and shall notify the utility immediately of any tampering with damage to, or removal of any equipment.

E. For violation of and/or non-compliance with these rules and regulations.

F. For failure of the customer to fulfill his contractual obligations for service and/or facilities subject to regulation by the Commission.

G. For failure of the customer to permit the utility reasonable access to its equipment.

H. For non-payment of any amounts due for connection charges and/or for service rendered provided that the utility has made a reasonable attempt to effect collection and has given the customer the proper notice as required by R.103-535.1.

I. For molesting or tampering with any service or sewerage pipe, or for illegally making connection into any sewerage line for the disposal of drainage surface waters.

J. For failure of the customer to provide the utility with a deposit as authorized by R.103-531.

K. For failure of the customer to furnish permits, certificates, and/or rights of way, as necessary to obtaining service, or in the event such permissions are withdrawn or terminated.

L. No sewer utility shall be required to furnish its sewerage service or to continue its service to any applicant who, at the time of such application, is indebted or any member of his household is indebted, under an undisputed bill to such sewer utility company for sewerage service previously furnished such applicant or furnished any other member of the applicant's household. However, for the purposes of this regulation, the sewer utility may not consider any indebtedness which was incurred by the applicant or any member of his household more than six (6) years prior to the time of application.

M. The utility may discontinue a customer's service should that customer be in arrears on an account for service at another premises unless the customer pays a reasonable amount of his arrears account and makes reasonable arrangement with the utility to amortize the balance of such past due or arrears account over a reasonable length of time, not to exceed twelve months.

N. For the reason that the customer's use of the utility's service conflicts with, or violates, orders, ordinances or laws, of the State or any subdivision thereof, or of the Commission.

~~1. Notice Prior to Discontinuance of Service. Before any sewerage service may be discontinued, the utility must give thirty (30) days written notice to the customer, unless A of this rule is applicable, with copies forwarded to the appropriate county health department and the South Carolina Public Service Commission, all by certified mail. At the expiration of the thirty (30) day period, the utility shall post a second notice by certified mail to the customer advising that following ten days thereafter, his service may be discontinued at any time without further notice. After the physical discontinuance of any sewerage service, the Division of Sanitary Engineering of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control shall immediately be notified of the action and the name and address of the customer.~~

~~O. In the case of a landlord/tenant relationship where the tenant is the customer, the utility may require the landlord to execute an agreement wherein such landlord agrees to be responsible for all charges billed to that premises in accordance with the approved~~

~~tariffs for that utility and the Rules of the Commission, and said account shall be considered the landlord's and tenant's account. In the event the landlord refuses to execute such an agreement, the utility may not discontinue service to the premises unless and until the tenant becomes delinquent on his account or until the premises are vacated. The utility may discontinue service pursuant to R.103-535.1 if the account is delinquent or may discontinue service at the time the premises are vacated and the utility shall not be required to furnish service to the premises until the landlord has executed the agreement, and paid any reconnection charges.~~

**PQ.** No utility shall be required to furnish, or continue to furnish its sewerage service to any premises to which the utility has not inspected the service connection, provided however, if the utility has waived its right to inspect the service connection, it may not refuse to furnish nor refuse to continue service to the premises.

**QP.** For nonpayment of any connection charge properly imposed by the utility and owed by the customer provided that the utility has made a reasonable attempt to effect collection and has given the customer 30 days written notice, sent by certified mail to the customer's billing address, with a copy forwarded to the Commission. A connection charge owed by a third party or a previous occupant or owner of premises is not deemed to be owed by the current customer, and that current customer's service may not be disconnected under such circumstances. At the expiration of the 30 day period, the utility shall post a second notice by certified mail to the customer advising that in not less than 10 days nor more than 30 days, his service may be discontinued at any time without further notice.

#### **103-535.1. Notice Prior to Discontinuance of Service.**

Before any sewerage service may be discontinued, the utility must give thirty (30) days written notice to the customer, by certified mail, unless R.103-535.A is applicable, with copies forwarded to the appropriate county health department and the South Carolina Public Service Commission. At the expiration of the thirty (30) day period, the utility shall post a second notice by certified mail to the customer advising that in not less than 10 days nor more than 30 days, his service may be discontinued at any time without further notice. After the physical ~~discontinuance~~ disconnection of any sewerage service, the Division of ~~Sanitary Engineering~~ Environmental Health of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and the ORS shall immediately be notified of the action and the name and address of the customer. Service will be terminated only on Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M., unless provisions have been made to have someone available to accept payment and reconnect service.

#### **103-536. Insufficient Reasons for Denying Service.**

The following shall not constitute sufficient cause for refusal of service to a present or prospective customer.

A. Non-payment for service by a previous occupant of the premises to be served, unless such previous occupant shall benefit from such new service.

B. Failure to pay for merchandise purchased from the utility.

C. Failure to pay for a different type or class of public utility service.

D. Failure to pay the bill of another customer as guarantor thereof.

**103-537. Right of Access.**

A. The authorized agents of the utility shall have the right of access to the customer's premises, at reasonable hours, for the purpose of inspecting the customer's sewerage connections and for any other purpose which is proper and necessary in the conduct of the utility's business.

B. When a sewerage line which is property of a utility is on the property of a resident in the utility's service area which is on file with the Commission, the resident shall provide reasonable access to the utility for maintenance thereof. Any damage done to the property by the utility shall be corrected by the restoration of comparable grass, shrubbery, and trees from nursery stock to conform with the condition before the maintenance process began.

**103-538. Customer Complaints.**

A. Complaints concerning the charges, practices, facilities, or service of the utility shall be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The utility shall keep such records of customer complaints as will enable it and ~~the Commission~~ ORS to review and analyze the utility's procedures and actions. All customer complaints will be processed pursuant to R.103-516 and R.103-530.F.

B. When the ~~Commission~~ ORS has notified the utility that an oral complaint has been received concerning a specific account and such complaint has been received by the ~~Commission~~ ORS before service is terminated, the utility shall not discontinue the service of that account until the ~~Commission's~~ ORS's investigation is completed and the results have been received by the utility. Service shall not be discontinued if the complainant requests in writing a hearing before the Commission.

**103-539. Tariff's Rules and Regulations.**

A copy of the utility's tariffs as filed with this Commission will be on file in the local business offices of the utility and shall be available for public inspection.

**103-540. System Which Utility Must Maintain.**

Each utility, unless specifically relieved in any case by the Commission from such

obligation, shall operate and maintain in safe, efficient and proper conditions of all of its facilities and equipment used in connection with the services it provides to any customer up to and including the point of delivery from systems or facilities owned by the customer.

**103-541. Contracts.**

No utility shall execute or enter into any agreement or contract with any person, firm, partnership, or corporation or any agency of the Federal, State or local government which would impact, pertain to, or effect said utility's fitness, willingness, or ability to provide sewer service, including but not limited to the collection or treatment of said wastewater, without first submitting said contract in form to the Commission and the ORS and obtaining approval of the Commission.

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**SUBARTICLE 5**

**ENGINEERING**

**103-550. Good Engineering Practice.**

The sewerage plant of the utility shall be constructed, installed, maintained and operated in accordance with accepted good engineering practice to assure, as far as reasonably possible, continuity of service, uniformity in the quality of service furnished, and the safety of persons and property.

**103-551. Design and Construction Requirements**

The design and construction of the sewerage plant shall conform to the requirements of the Bureau of ~~Wastewater and Stream Quality Control~~ Water of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

**103-552. Minimum Pipe Size.**

The mains shall be at least eight (8) inches inside diameter and the utility's service pipes shall be at least four (4) inches inside diameter.

**103-553. Adequacy of Sewerage Plant.**

The capacity of the utility's plant for the collection, transmission, treatment and disposal of sewage, sewage effluent and other removed substances must be sufficiently large to meet all normal demands for service and provide a reasonable reserve for emergencies.

The utility shall furnish the ~~Commission~~ ORS with the following:

1) Statement by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control that the design has been approved;

- 2) Statement by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control that the utility was installed according to plans and specifications;
- 3) Statement by a professional engineer that the utility design meets his approval and the utility was installed with the approval of a professional engineer; and
- 4) Copy of "as built" plans and specifications approved by a professional engineer.

**103-554. Inspection of Sewerage Plant.**

Each utility must adopt a program of regular inspection of its sewerage plant in order to determine the necessity for replacement and repair. The frequency of the various inspections shall be based on the utility's experience and accepted good practice. Each utility shall keep sufficient records to substantiate compliance with its inspection program.

**103-555. Service Pipe Connections.**

A. Utility's Service Pipe--The utility shall install and maintain that portion of the service pipe from the main to the boundary line of the property being served, public road, or street under which such main may be located. The connection of the service pipe to the main must be made using appropriate wyes, saddles, or other acceptable fittings.

B. Customer's Service Pipe--The customer shall install and maintain that portion of the service pipe from the end of the utility's service pipe into the premises served. The portion of the service pipe installed and maintained by the customer shall conform to all reasonable rules and regulations of the utility. It must be constructed of approved materials and must be installed and maintained in accordance with accepted good practice and in conformance with applicable codes of governmental regulations. Each customer's service pipe shall serve no more than one customer.

C. Restrictions on Installation--A sewer service pipe shall not be laid in the same trench with water pipe unless the water service pipe is laid on a shelf on the side of the trench, not less than twelve (12) inches above and not less than eighteen (18) inches horizontally away from the sewer pipe.

D. Inspection--If a governmental agency requires an inspection of the customer's plumbing, the utility shall not connect the customer's service pipe until it receives a notice from that governmental agency certifying that the customer's plumbing conforms to those standards set by the agency.

E. Service Pipe Connection--The utility shall be responsible for providing the location for the connection of the customer's service pipe to the utility's service pipe or the utility's main, whichever is applicable, at the utility's expense, and at no expense to the customer. The utility shall have the right to inspect the service connection to the utility service line at the time of the completion of connection, and the service may not be provided to such

connection until the utility inspects the service line.

**103-556. Engineering Analysis.**

A. The ~~Commission~~ ORS may survey anticipated extensions of sewer lines and the utility will assist in such survey and provide all pertinent data necessary to determine the cost and feasibility of extending such lines.

B. The utility shall provide the ~~Commission~~ ORS access to all utility property when the ~~Commission~~ ORS undertakes to verify the inventories of utility plant systems, or obtain other necessary information.

**SUBARTICLE 6**

**INSPECTION AND TESTS**

**103-560. Utility Inspection and Test.**

A. Each utility shall adopt a program of periodic tests, inspections, and preventive maintenance designed to achieve and maintain efficient operation of its system and the rendition of safe, adequate and continuous service.

B. Each utility shall maintain or have access to test facilities enabling it to determine the operation and collecting capabilities of all equipment and facilities provided by the utility. These test facilities shall be sufficient for routine maintenance and for trouble location. The actual collection performance of each sewerage system shall be monitored regularly in order to determine if the established objectives and operating requirements are met.

**103-561. ~~Commission~~ ORS Inspection and Test.**

When tests are conducted by the ~~Commission~~ ORS, to insure that, or determine if, the provisions of these rules are being adhered to, each utility shall assist with such tests as requested, provided such request is in accordance with all legal requirements and sanctions.

**103-562. Testing Facilities.**

Each utility shall make such tests as are prescribed under these rules with such frequency and in such manner and at such places as is herewith provided or as requested by ORS or as may be approved or ordered by the Commission.

**103-563. Trouble Reports.**

A. Each utility shall provide for the receipt of customer trouble reports at all hours and make a full and prompt investigation of all complaints. Each utility shall maintain an accurate record of trouble reports made by its customers. This record shall include

appropriate identification of the customer or service affected the time, the date, and nature of the report, the action taken to alleviate the trouble or satisfy the complaint, and the date and time of trouble clearance or other disposition of the complaint. This record shall be available to the Commission and ORS upon request at any time within the period prescribed for retention of such records.

B. Provisions shall be made to clear trouble of any emergency nature at all times, consistent with the needs of customers and the personal safety of utility personnel.

C. Provisions shall be made to keep all commitments to customers. If unusual repairs are required, or other factors preclude clearing of reported trouble promptly, reasonable efforts shall be made to notify affected customers.

#### **103-564. Maintenance of Plant and Equipment.**

A. Each sewerage utility shall adopt and pursue a maintenance program aimed at achieving and maintaining efficient operation of its system so as to permit the rendering of safe, adequate and continuous service at all times.

B. Maintenance shall include keeping all plant and equipment in a good state of repair, consistent with safety and adequate performance factors.

1) Broken, damaged, or deteriorated parts which are no longer serviceable shall be repaired or replaced.

2) Adjustable apparatus and equipment shall be readjusted as necessary when found to be in an unsatisfactory operating condition.

### **SUBARTICLE 7**

#### **STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF SERVICE**

##### **103-570. Quality of Service.**

A. Each utility shall provide sewerage service insofar as practicable free from objectionable odors. Each utility must have a permit as required by the health laws of the State of South Carolina, and shall comply with all laws and regulations of State and local agencies pertaining to sewerage service.

B. It shall be the obligation of each utility dependent upon its ability to procure and retain suitable facilities and rights for the construction and maintenance of the necessary system to furnish adequate sewerage service to customers in the area or territory in which it operates. Such service is to be rendered according to lawfully established and approved rates and charges for the specific territory involved.

##### **103-571. Interruptions of Service.**



A. Each utility shall make reasonable efforts to avoid interruptions of service, but when such interruptions occur, service shall be re-established within the shortest time practicable, consistent with considerations of safety.

B. Scheduled interruptions shall be made at a time that will not cause unreasonable inconvenience to customers and shall be preceded by adequate notice to those who will be affected.

C. Each utility shall maintain records and notify the Commission and the ORS of any interruption in its service in accordance with 103-514.

## **SUBARTICLE 8**

### **SAFETY**

#### **103-580. Acceptable Standards.**

As criteria of accepted good safety practice the Commission will use the applicable provisions of the standards referred to in 103-551.

#### **103-581. Protective Measures.**

A. Each utility shall exercise reasonable care to reduce the hazards to which its employees, its customers, and the general public may be subjected.

B. The utility shall give reasonable assistance to the ~~Commission~~ ORS in the investigation of the causes of accidents and shall give reasonable assistance to the Commission and the ORS in the determination of suitable means of accident prevention.

C. Each utility shall maintain a summary of all reported accidents arising from its operations.

#### **103-582. Safety Program.**

Each utility shall devise and implement a safety program, adapted to the size and type of its operations. At a minimum, the safety program should:

(a) Require the employees to use suitable tools and equipment in order that they may perform their work in a safe manner;

(b) Instruct employees in safe methods of performing their work; and

(c) Instruct employees who, in the course of their work, are subject to the hazard of electrical shock, asphyxiation or drowning, in accepted methods of artificial respiration.